



Indigenous Legal Systems in Senegalese Law Practice: A Study of Knowledge Integration

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Abstract

Indigenous legal systems in Senegal have been significantly influenced by traditional African jurisprudence, which often incorporates oral traditions and community-based decision-making processes. The research employs a qualitative approach involving in-depth interviews with legal practitioners, focus group discussions with community members, and document analysis of court records and legislative documents. Data triangulation techniques were used to ensure robustness of findings. A notable finding is the significant incorporation of traditional healing practices into civil law cases, particularly affecting child custody disputes where indigenous healers' opinions are often considered alongside legal evidence. Indigenous knowledge systems significantly influence Senegalese law and contribute to more culturally sensitive judicial decisions, although their integration remains largely informal and unregulated. The establishment of a formal recognition process for traditional legal practices could enhance the effectiveness and legitimacy of indigenous knowledge in contemporary Senegalese courts.

Keywords: *African geography, Indigenous legal knowledge, Jurisprudence, Community-based systems, Oral traditions, Customary law, Legal anthropology*

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